

## HEADQUARTERS

3rd Battalion, 5th Marines  
1st Marine Division (Rein) FMF  
San Francisco, California 96602

68 0486

Copy 8 of 12 copies

3/RJM/dan  
5750  
3 February 1968

D.V

From: Commanding Officer  
To: Commanding General, 1st Marine Division (Rein)  
Via: Commanding Officer, 5th Marines

Subj: Command Chronology for period 010001H to 312400H Jan 1968.

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.2A  
(b) FMF PacO 5750.8  
(c) DivO 5750.2B

Encl: (1) Command Chronology Report  
(2) Combat After Action Report - Operation AUBURN

1. In accordance with the provisions of references (a), (b) and (c) the Command Chronology for the month of January 1968 is submitted.

*W.K. ROCKEY*  
W.K. ROCKEY

68 0075X

3/5 SAC  
0027-68  
COPY # 16 of 14 COPIES  
COPY 2 OF 6 COPIES

5TH MAR DIV FILES
0027-68
COPY NO. 6 OF 12

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.  
DOD DIR 5200.10

UNCLASSIFIED

3-4 BN/5TH MAR

CMD CHRON

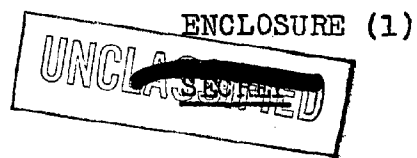
JAN 1968

HEADQUARTERS  
3rd Battalion, 5th Marines  
1st Marine Division, (Rein) FMF  
FPO San Francisco, California 96602

COMMAND CHRONOLOGY  
010001H to 312400H Jan 1968

INDEX

PART I - Organizational Data  
PART II - Narrative Data  
PART III - Sequential Listings of Significant Events



PART I  
ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

1. DESIGNATION                      COMMANDER                      PERIOD COVERED

3rd Battalion, 5th Marines    LtCol W.K. ROCKEY

SUBORDINATE UNITS

H&S Co	Capt R. J. MARNELL	
Co I	Capt H. KOLAKOWSKI, Jr.	
Co K	Capt L. W. FARMER	23 Nov 67-29 Jan 68
	1st Lt. F. W. SMITH	30 Jan 68
Co L	Capt J. D. NIOTIS	
Co M	Capt J. E. MITCHELL	

2. LOCATION: Quang Nam Province, RVN

3. STAFF OFFICERS

XO	Maj R. C. WISE	
S-1	WO J. S. BISESI	
S-2	WO J. W. BEVIER	
S-3	Capt G. W. BOWERS	
S-4	1stLt F. W. SMITH	19 Nov 67-25 Jan 68
	1stLt G. C. BACON	26 Jan 68
S-5	Capt J. A. FERNANDEZ	

4. AVERAGE MONTHLY STRENGTH

USMC		USN	
<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>
37	1249	2	53

UNCLASSIFIED

ENCLOSURE (1)

UNCLASSIFIED

*Jan. 1968*

PART II  
NARRATIVE SUMMARY

There currently exists a need in the Command for three 0302 Captains, an 0202 Captain, and an 0402 Captain. There is a need for 1 Master Sergeant, 2 Gunnery Sergeants, and 9 Staff Sergeants 0369. There is a need for seven 2531 personnel. The major shortage is in small unit leadership in the 03 field. This shortage is made more evident by the fact that the Battalion has only 50% of its M/L strength in Captains (OF03).

Battalion Intelligence efforts were primarily directed toward the proposed new AO. The enemy continued to work in small groups of three to seven. The mining and sniping incidents have sharply increased during January 1968, especially in the last few days of the month.

The Battalion completed Operation AUBURN and conducted one search and destroy operation. Intensive patrolling of the rocket belt has continued with numerous platoon and Company (-) sized operations.

Four communications schools of three days each were held for the radio operators from squad to battalion level. Radio operators proficiency has greatly increased as a result of the classes. The Indoctrination of Newly Joined Personnel has become an increasing burden with the volume and variety of subject matter now required to be taught.

DECLASSIFIED

ENCLOSURE (1)

UNCLASSIFIED

PART III  
SEQUENTIAL LISTINGS OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1. TOPICS

a. Personnel and Administration

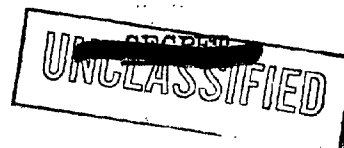
(1) The Battalion began the month of January with an on board strength of 40 Marine Officers, 1216 Marine Enlisted, 2 Navy Officers, and 55 Navy Enlisted. The current on board strength is 39 Marine Officers, 1213 Marine Enlisted, 2 Navy Officers, and 54 Navy Enlisted.

(2) One Marine Officer is TAD in excess of 30 days. The current effective strength of the Battalion is 36 Marine Officers and 1128 Marine Enlisted. Of these 6 Marine Officers, 207 Marine Enlisted and 6 Navy Enlisted are OPCON to 7th Marinos.

(3) Two Marine Officers and 58 Marine Enlisted are scheduled for rotation during February 1968 as shown below:

MOS	NUMBER
0302	1
3502	1
0141	4
0311	43
2531	5
3041	1
3051	1
3381	1
3531	1
4131	1
2532	1

ENCLOSURE (1)



(4) Critical MOS shortages are shown below:

<u>MOS</u>	<u>ML</u>	<u>OH</u>	<u>SHORTAGE</u>
0302	34	32	1 Maj, 2 Capt (over 1 Lt)
0202	1	0	1 Capt
0402	1	0	1 Capt
0130	2	1	1 Lt
0369	34	24	1 MSgt, 2 GySgt, 7 SSgt
2531	32	25	7 PFC
2867	1	0	1 SSgt
3516	6	3	1 Sgt, 1 Cpl, 1 L/Cpl
5931	3	1	2 Cpl

CASUALTIES

KIA	9
DOW	3
WIA	73
WIANE	13
Non Hostile	8
MIA	1

b. Intelligence

(1) Personnel

(a) During the month of January the Battalion Intelligence Section lost two scouts, (Corporals, 0311) to normal rotation.

(b) S-2 Attachments. The two Scout Dog Teams, previously in direct support, were withdrawn to III MAF on 19 January. Remaining attachments include two MP's ITF Team and, four Scout Sniper Teams.

(2) Collection. The two main collection/target acquisition efforts during the month of January 1968 were:

ENCLOSURE (1)

UNCLASSIFIED

(a) The new proposed area of operation for 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines.

(b) Our present area including the local guerrilla modus operandi analysis and a continuation of the terrain studies of those areas in which the local enemy most frequently operates.

(3) Reporting. The Battalion S-2 Section conducted at least one commanders and staff intelligence briefing each day and several individual and small unit briefings during January 1968.

(4) Enemy Activity

(a) The enemy Activity in our TAOR for the month of January 1968 has shown a definite increase of enemy harassment. All friendly units in the TAOR have experienced this increase, mainly in the form of sniping and mining incidents. The local guerrillas have continued to conduct the majority of their activities in organized cells containing from 3 to 7 members. In the southern section of the TAOR there have been numerous sightings of enemy movement in units ranging from platoon to company size. Many of these units are unidentified, indicating constant movement. The presence of at least two SAPPER companies traveling through the TAOR may explain the increase of mines and booby traps throughout the area. The following identified units have been reported in or near the TAOR:

1 On January 8, the 42nd Co. of the 41st Bn sighted in Grid AT 9565.

2 The Q-15th Co (AKA: X-65th, Dien Ban Co.) was sighted on the 17th of January. In Grid BT0665

3 One Co. of the T-89th Bn (AKA: 402 Bn) was reported in Grid AT9965 on January 20th.

4 Two companies of the 41st Draftee Bn were located in Grid 9565 on the 20th of January.

5 There are at least three (3) known units operating South of our TAOR in the Go Noi Island area.

ENCLOSURE (1)

UNCLASSIFIED

6 Recent reports of enemy movement have been: 24 January, R-20th Bn in Grid AT9653; 16 January, V-25th Bn in Grid BT0654; 19 January, the 3rd Bn., 3rd NVA Regt in Grid BT0854.

(b) On the 30th of January, 1968, the 3/5 Alpha Command Group and India Co were heli-lifted into a suspected enemy position in the Northernmost portion of the TAOR vicinity BT040715. With ARVN blocking, India Co conducted a well coordinated sweep of the area, which contained an estimated enemy battalion. Upon completion of the sweep, there was a confirmed count of 102 VC KIA, 88 POW's, 13 VC suspects and 70 laborers. Captured enemy equipment, weapons, medical supplies, documents, etc. are included in January's total captured equipment. (See paragraph 10.) The enemy force was a combination of hard-core VC from several different units. Members of the R-20th Bn, the V-25th Bn, and the C130 Bn were included. Intentions of the unit prior to the contact are unknown except for the probable mission of harassment of the Da Nang area. During TET 3/5 suffered light casualties in comparison to the casualties inflicted upon the enemy.

(c) The enemy has used the recent Cease-Fire periods to his advantage. Resupply and reorganization have been his most important objectives. His use of propaganda has increased during the month of January. Numerous leaflets, banners, etc., have recently been found throughout the TAOR. Secret meetings and the use of loud speakers have also been reported.

(d) The enemy activities during January have indicated the following capabilities:

- 1 Continued harassing action to include:
  - a Sniping
  - b Small scale attacks and ambushes
  - c Use of mines and booby-traps
  - d Propaganda
  - e Terrorism
- 2 Attack selected friendly installations with medium mortars and/or heavy rockets.
- 3 Attack isolated units in company or battalion strength.

ENCLOSURE (1)

7

UNCLASSIFIED



(5) Vietnamese Attachments

(a) Interpreters. The Battalion is presently supported by Four ARVN interpreters. Three are attached to the S-2 and one works with the S-5 Section. The interpreters have direct liaison with the company commanders enabling them to use their skills most efficiently. The value of interpreters in the field and in the combat base has been proven many times. At the present, the interpreters are holding English language classes in order to expand the language proficiency of all Vietnamese personnel attached to this Battalion.

(b) Kit Carson Scouts. At the present, five Kit Carson scouts are attached to the Battalion. They have provided excellent support on search and destroy operations and also on the frequent platoon-sized patrols out of the combat base. The Kit Carson Scouts are attending the English language classes being given by the interpreters. As their skill with the language improves, their value to the battalion will increase.

(6) Enemy Losses. The enemy suffered the following casualties as a result of 3/5 actions in January:

KIA	114
WIA	0
POW	88
DET	29

(7) Weather

(a) Rainfall 1.16 inches

(b) Temperature:

1 Average High-78

2 Average Low-69

(c) Average Sunrise-0718H; Average Sunset-1835H

(8) Terrain. See Command Chronology for October 1967.

(9) The following lists are the totals of weapons and equipment captured by 3rd Bn. 5th Marines during the month of January 1968.

ENCLOSURE (1)

UNCLASSIFIED

(a) Weapons

1 Soviet LMG, 7.62mm DPM  
14 Soviet/ChiComm AK-47, 7.62mm rifles  
3 Soviet 7.62mm semi-auto rifles, SKS  
6 Soviet 7.62mm bolt action rifles  
1 ChiComm 7.62mm HMG  
4 TT-33 pistols, 7.63mm, TOPKAREV  
3 US cal.30 BAR'S  
1 US 7.62mm M-14 rifle, modified  
4 US cal.30 M-2 carbines  
1 US cal.30 1903 Springfield rifle  
1 US cal.45 pistol  
2 Soviet B-40 Rocket Launchers  
1 Flare pistol, unknown origin

(b) Ordnance

2 ChiComm Bangalore Torpedoes  
75 ChiComm Concussion grenades  
20 US hand grenades, M-26  
2 Soviet B-40 rounds  
800 Assorted small arms rounds

(c) 782 Gear. 350 pounds assorted equipment.

(d) First Aid Equipment. 175 pounds assorted medical equipment.

(e) Documents. 50 pounds

(f) Other.

1 US PRC-25 radio  
250 pounds rice

ENCLOSURE (1)

UNCLASSIFIED

c. Training

(1) Training included lectures, demonstrations, an/or application in the following subjects:

- (a) Weapons Safety
- (b) Radio Procedures
- (c) Spot Reports
- (d) Lightning Precautions
- (e) FO & FAC Procedures
- (f) Med Evac Procedures
- (g) Fam Firing of the Individual and crew

Served Weapons

(2) Additional classes for officers and staff NCO's were held on Spot Reports.

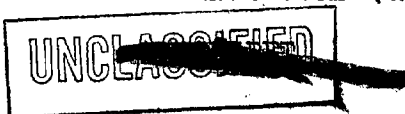
(3) The organization conducted three indoctrination schools. Classes on FO/FAC procedures, and on the care, cleaning, maintenance and safety of the M-16A1 rifle are included in the school syllabus.

(4) All units fired their individual weapons for familiarization at least twice this month. All crew served weapons have been fired.

(5) Personnel attended the following schools:

- |                                |    |
|--------------------------------|----|
| (a) SNCO Leadership School     | 1  |
| (b) NCO Leadership School      | 3  |
| (c) Vietnamese Language School | 3  |
| (d) CAG School                 | 20 |
| (e) Embarkation School         | 4  |
| (f) Basic Ammo Tech School     | 1  |

ENCLOSURE (1)



(3) The area in which artillery harrassing and interdiction fires can be employed has been considerably reduced. H&I targets are plotted 500 meters either side of the SONG THANH QUIT in order to reduce infiltration.

(4) During the month of January, Battery F fired on a total of 92 missions in support of 3/5. 42 were observed and 50 unobserved. A total of 683 HE-fuze quick, 197 HE-fuze VT, 87 white phosphorus and 100 illumination rounds were fired. Battery F fired a total of 793 rounds of which 736 were HE, 45 white phosphorus, and 72 smoke. Bravo Battery, OPCON to 3rd Battalion, 11th Marines fired a total of 283 HE and 9 white phosphorus in support of 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines on Operation No Name 98, conducted on 30 and 31 January 1968. A grand total of 1476 rounds were fired in the month of January.

#### f. Air Support

(1) Tactical Fixed Wing Support during January, one air strike was conducted in support of tactical operations.

#### (2) Helicopter Support

(a) 43 Med Evacs, including 22 emergency Med Evacs.

(b) one assult landing with helicopter gun support.

(c) 4 visual reconnaissance flights

(d) 5 resupplies to troops in field

#### (3) Other Fixed Wing Support

(a) 4 Air Observer missions

(b) 7 Flare ship missions

(4) Personnel. There were two ALO/FAC Officers assigned to this battalion. Sufficient trained personnel were available to provide radio teams at Company and Battalion level.

#### g. Communications

(1) The AN/PRC-25 has continued to serve as a reliable means of communications. Schooling was held this past month on the various field expedient antennas that can be used with the AN/PRC-25, thus anticipating damage to the AC-292's which is highly probable in a combat environment.

ENCLOSURE (1)

UNCLASSIFIED

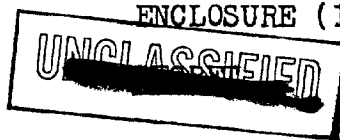
d. Operations

- (1) At 010001H Operation AUBURN continues
- (2) At 031133H chopped company G, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines to parent unit.
- (3) At 031400H chopped Company E, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines to parent unit.
- (4) At 031430H chopped company E, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines to parent unit.
- (5) At 031530H Operation AUBURN terminated. Alpha Command Group and Company M 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines returned to combat base.
- (6) At 121200H 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines chopped OPCON 1st Marine Division.
- (7) At 121800H Song Thanh, Quit became the southern boundary of the TAOR.
- (8) At 151550H 2nd Platoon, Company I chopped OPCON 1st Marine Division for Rough Rider.
- (9) At 151800H Company L chopped OPCON 7th Marines.
- (10) At 201100H 2nd Platoon, Company I returned from Rough Rider.
- (11) At 300930H Alpha Command Group and Company I departed on Operation No Name 98.
- (12) At 311615H Alpha Command Group and Company I returned from Operation No Name 98.

e. Artillery Support

- (1) Battery F 2nd Battalion, 11th Marines supported the final days of Operation AUBURN from hill 55 and Dien Ban.
- (2) As of 13 January, Battery F was chopped OPCON to 3rd Battalion, 11th Marines. The Artillery liaison personnel with 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines are therefore OPCON to 7th Marines, 3/11's directly supported unit.

ENCLOSURE (1)



(2) Additional emphasis was also placed on training, use, and preventive maintenance of HF and UHF radios because of the Battalion's anticipated move North.

(3) Communications security was stressed on all levels because of the increased enemy activity in our TAOR and the high probability of enemy monitoring.

(4) Four schools (3 days in length) were held by the communications platoon for the rifle company personnel. These covered a multitude of communications topics, from wire splicing and voice radio procedures to artillery and air request methods.

(5) Generally the time spent this past month has been devoted to schooling and preventative maintenance, with particular attention being given to supply procedures and accountability. Vast improvements have been made on record keeping and maintenance logs.

#### h. Logistics

(1) General. The overall logistical status of the battalion is satisfactory. Deadlined vehicles in the Motor Transport section are becoming an increasing problem due to the non-availability of parts.

(2) Supply. Battalion Supply extensively prepared for the projected move. Items of supply not being currently used were transported by tractor trailer to our warehouse in Da Nang for storage. All other supplies were palletized and tactically marked for embarkation. All outstanding requisitions prior to 7260 were cancelled due to a reconciliation of backorders. After reviewing stock record cards to determine valid requirements for material which was cancelled from FLC or Third Force Service Regiment, reinstatements for valid requirements were made. One Milk Dispenser, w/stand, was turned into Division Food Service upon direction from that office and subsequently dropped from the Garrison Property Account. The Battalion received one Household Refrigerator, Electric, from Garrison Property for the Battalion Aid Station. By the last week in January, all Equipment Custody Cards (NAVMC 10359-SD) for Responsible Officers, were reviewed, corrected, and updated.

ENCLOSURE (1)



(3) Motor Transport. Considerable difficulty in obtaining repair parts for M422A1's and M274A2's, especially spark plugs, spark plug cables, magneto, starters, and innertubes, is being experienced. Priority 02 and NORS requisitions have failed to alleviate the existing problem. Division Supply, Division Motor Transport, and G-4 have been advised of this situation by direct liaison and through regular reporting channels. Maximum effort has been made to consolidate requirements for vehicles from the various sections to reduce duplication of utilization.

(4) Construction. Engineers have continued to improve internal road networks and road drainage. In preparation for the occupancy of the combat base by another unit, they began removing vegetation and building a berm along the LZ for a small perimeter. They completely dismantled the garage and moved it to their Battalion Headquarters. In addition, they are filling the garbage dump and digging a new area to be enclosed by barbed wire.

#### i. Civic Action

(1) Medcap. 707 local Vietnamese were treated by the Battalion MEDCAP team. Due to our expected move there were no mobile medcaps held.

(2) Psyops. A total of 11,350 Psyops leaflets were hand distributed by Marines of the Battalion. A total of 12 aerial leaflet drops were conducted throughout the TAOR. Two of the leaflet drops were especially requested by this Battalion. One of them was to exploit an incident wherein two Vietnamese boys were injured by a VC booby trap. In this drop a total of 1000 VC atrocity leaflets were placed on grid BT630000. The second drop was requested through CAP D-1, to exploit the hardships of the VC life during TET. 5,000 special TET leaflets were ordered, to be passed out before and during the Vietnamese New Year.

(3) Civil Affairs Assistance. A total of 300 lbs of rice was distributed throughout the TAOR. CAP D-1 was given 50 lbs of soap and 50 lbs of clothing to be distributed to the area population.

(4) Problems. No major problems were encountered by the Battalion S-5 during the month of January.

ENCLOSURE (1)

**UNCLASSIFIED**

(5) Training. Nine sewing classes were held at the Battalion MEDCAP Station. A sewing machine was procured through Regiment, and the sewing classes were taught how to use it. A total of 90 girls attended the classes.

(6) Serious Incidents. Three serious incidents were investigated during January. The most recent one, involving the shooting of a Vietnamese civilian, is still under investigation.

(7) Contacts with the local Officials. The Hamlet Chief of DUC KY was escorted to his hamlet by Marines of this Battalion. While he was in his hamlet, he investigated local VC activity.

## 2. Chronology of Events

1-3	January	Continuation and completion of Operation AUBURN
26	January	1st Lt G. C. BACON assigned to duty as S-4
30	January	1st Lt F. W. SMITH assigned to Company K for duty as Commanding Officer
30-31	January	Conducted search and destroy operation

UNCLASSIFIED

ENCLOSURE (1)

UNCLASSIFIED



UNCLASSIFIED

HEADQUARTERS  
3rd Battalion, 5th Marines  
1st Marine Division (Rein) FMF  
FPO San Francisco, California 96602

3/GWB/dab  
3121  
5 January 1968

From: Commanding Officer  
To: Commanding Officer, 5th Marines

Subj: Combat After Action Report

Ref: (a) Division Order 3480.1  
(b) 5th Marines Frag Order 74-67

Encl: (1) ~~Operation Overlay~~

1. Code Name. Operation AUBURN.
2. Date of Operation. 280835H December 1967 031530H January 1968.
3. Location of Operation. Go Noi Island, Quang Tin Province, Republic of Vietnam.
4. Command Headquarters. See Task Organization.
5. Task Organization

3rd Battalion, (-) (Rein), 5th Marines LtCol ROCKEY

H&S Co (-) Capt MARNELL  
Det, Btry F, 2nd Bn, 11th Marines  
Det, 1st SP Bn (HST)  
Det, 1st Eng Bn  
Det, Med Plt

2

Co I Capt KOLAKOWSKI  
Co I (Rein)  
Det, H&S Co  
Det, Med Plt  
Det, Comm Plt (FAC Tm)  
Det, Intel Sec (Scout)  
Det, Btry F, 2nd Bn, 11th Marines  
Det, 1st Engineer Battalion  
Det, 1st SP Battalion (HST)

Co E 2/3 Capt CAHILL  
Co E (Rein)  
Det, H&S Co 2/3  
Det, Med Plt

ENCLOSURE (2)

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

Det, Comm Plt  
 Det, 1st Engineer Bn  
 Det, Btry D, 2nd Bn 11th Marines  
 Det, 1st SP Battalion (HST)  
 Det, Scout Dogs

Co E 2/5

Capt McKEE

Co E (Rein)

Det H&amp;S Co 2/5

Det Med Plt

Det Comm Plt

Det, Btry E 2nd Bn, 11th Marines

Det, Scout Dog Team

Co G 2/5

Capt MEADOWS

Co G (Rein)

Det, H&amp;S Co 2/5

Det, Med Plt

Det, Comm Plt

Det, Btry E 2nd Bn, 11th Marines

1st Plt, Co H 2/5

Det, 1st Engineer Bn

Co M

Capt MITCHELL

Co M (Rein)

Det, H&amp;S Co

Det, Med Plt

Det, Comm Plt

Det, Scout Dog Team

Det, Btry F, 2nd Bn, 11th Marines

Det, 1st Engineer Bn

## 6. Supporting Forces

### a. Artillery

(1) From Commencement of Operation AUBURN at 280835H December 1967 until completion at 031530H January 1968, the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines received direct artillery support from Battery F, 2nd Battalion, 11th Marines. At no time during the Operation was the Battalion without artillery support. Battery F, 2/11 fired a total of 1,509 rounds in support of the operation. These were observed fire missions and harassing and interdiction fires.

(2) On D-day a coordination problem occurred which resulted in sporadic artillery support. Artillery was placed in check fire status from the time an aircraft left the runway, until it returned.

(3) There were three batteries in general support; 1st Plt, 3rd 8" Howitzers, Battery E, 2/11, and Battery W, 3/11. They fired 501 rounds in support of the Operation.

UNCLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE (2)

UNCLASSIFIED

(4) Several friendly WIA's (minor) resulted from calling artillery on enemy units that were heavily and closely engaged with the Battalion. This was a calculated risk dictated by the situation.

b. Air

(1) During Operation AUBURN, weather was not a significant deterrent to the utilization of close air support.

(2) Fixed wing support was used extensively and effectively on D-day and D+1. A total of 50 fixed wing missions were run in support of 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines during the Operation.

(3) Most fixed wing missions were controlled by aerial observers and monitored by the forward air controllers. Target coverage was excellent.

(4) Helicopters were utilized extensively throughout the Operation for assault landings, medevacs and resupply.

(5) Flare ships were used in support of the defensive positions on five occasions.

7. Intelligence

a. The enemy forces, anticipated on Operation AUBURN were not expected to exceed one NVA Battalion, two VCMF Battalion, three local force guerrilla companies, and selected hamlet/village defense squads. This intelligence was passed to the Battalion Commander, staff and unit commanders in estimate, briefing and overlay form.

b. The following enemy units were identified as being disposed in the general area of Go Noi Island or within distance to possibly influence the action:

3rd Bn, 3rd NVA Regt  
V-25 Bn  
R-20 Bn  
R-24 Co  
Q-13 Co  
Q-15 Co

c. A past operation intelligence estimate of enemy forces encountered by 3rd Bn, 5th Marines was one VCMF Battalion, and 20 to 30 local guerrilla snipers.

d. Collection and Dissemination

(1) During Operation AUBURN, the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines ITT Team interrogated over 100 Vietnamese nationals. No unit designations were developed but confirmation of numerous enemy activities in the area was achieved.

ENCLOSURE (2)  
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

(2) Captured documents included a squad leader's notebook, recent tax collection records, diplomas and personal letters with unit designations affixed thereon (I.E. V-75, M5, Q-89 and Q-92). Drawings of bridges in the area with the unit V-75 (AKA for Q-92) were obtained.

(3) Captured rice totaling 11,000 pounds was destroyed in place because of the inability to transport it.

(4) Captured weapons were 5 rifles with 2000 rounds of new ammunition, 5 assorted hand grenades and two Smith & Wesson revolvers.

(5) Other captured gear included five 2.75 inch rockets, assorted detonating devices, four bottles of penicillin, one stethoscope, 250 assorted ampules of medicine, six uniforms, two homemade shape charges, two homemade bangalore torpedoes, and two aluminum tubes.

(6) Total enemy losses were 37 VC KIA (confirmed).

#### 8. Mission

During the conduct of Operation AUBURN, the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines was initially assigned the mission of providing blocking forces for attacking ARVN units. On D+1, this mission was modified to that of a detailed search and destroy operation to the West on Go Noi Island.

#### 9. Concept of Operations

a. At L-hour on D-day the Battalion Command Group and two rifle Companies execute an assault helicopter landing, secure landing zone Hawk, seize Objectives A and B, and establish a block on the West side of the railroad track from 997616 to 003520. Two additional rifle Companies execute an assault helicopter landing, secure landing zone Eagle, seize Objective C, and establish a block along Phase Line Blue. ARVN forces sweep from East to West compressing enemy forces against the blocking positions of this Battalion.

b. On D+3 days the Battalion repositions its Companies and executes a deliberate search and destroy operation to the Western limit of the AO.

#### 10. Execution

##### a. 26 Dec 1967

At 261700H the Commanding Officer 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines, received the 5th Marines Operation Order for Operation AUBURN.

##### b. 27 Dec 1967

At 271500H Company E 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines was assigned to the Operation Control of 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

c. 28 Dec 1967

(1) At 280835H Company I and Company E, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines and the Alpha Command Group, commenced deploying by helicopter from the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Combat Base to assigned LZ Hawk. See Operation Overlay.

(2) At 281000H Company E and Company G, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines commenced deploying by helicopter from the 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Combat Base to assigned LZ Eagle. See Operation Overlay.

(3) At 281040H Company I secured Objective A.

(4) At 280940H Company E 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines encountered heavy small arms fire while moving from LZ Hawk to Objective B. Company E returned fire and called air strikes. Company E advanced through initial enemy positions at 993533 and by 281115H began receiving heavy automatic and semi-automatic weapons fire from enemy positions in the vicinity of 991532. Company E requested and received fixed wing support. This action continued until 281650H at which time Companies E and M broke contact and moved into night defensive positions centered at 996538.

(5) At 281220H, Company I moved from Objective A to support Company E. The 2nd platoon, Company I, at 997536, came under automatic, semi automatic and M79 fire from 997533. Small arms fire was returned and a fixed wing and helicopter gunship air strike was delivered. Sporadic automatic and semi-automatic weapons fire was received from the same area until 281620H.

(6) At 281400H Company G, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines seized Objective C.

(7) At 281530H Company M (Bald Eagle) departed, by helicopter, from the 3rd Bn, 5th Marines TAOR.

(8) At 281530H Company M began arriving in LZ Hawk and received small arms fire from enemy located at 998533 and 991632. Company I and Company E fired suppressive small arms fire in support of Company M's landing.

(9) At 281640H Company M received 40 rounds semi-automatic from treeline at 998529 while reoccupying objective A. It returned 100 rounds M60 MG, 60 rounds 5.56 and searched the area with negative results.

(10) At 281645H Company I at 997536 received a proximately 400 rounds mixed automatic and semi-automatic fire from 998533. It returned 400 rounds M-60 MG rounds, 200 rounds 5.56 and 10 M-79 rounds.

ENCLOSURE (2)  
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

(11) At 281710H an AO on station reported observing thirty-two enemy bodies, most of which were in green utilities, in front of Company E 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine positions.

(12) At 281800H, Companies E 2/3, M 3/5, and the Bn Command Group moved into night defensive positions centered at 996538. Company I organized a separate perimeter centered at 997536.

(13) At 282000H Company E 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, reported that at 018514 an undetermined number of VC were observed by a squad ambush, which fired 200 rounds mixed small arms fire. The area was searched with negative results.

d. 29 Dec 1967

(1) At 290820H Companies E and G, 2/5 moved by helicopter from LZ Quail to LZ Hawk in accordance with a Frag Order issued at 281140H by 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines.

(2) At 290855H 5th Marines Alpha Command Group and 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines Alpha Command Group displaced from respective Combat Bases to LZ Hawk. Company E and Company G 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines chopped to parent unit at this time. Operation AUBURN was then controlled by the 5th Marines, employing two maneuver battalions.

(3) At 290940H 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines secured Objective One.

(4) At 291140H Company I received approximately 500 rounds mixed small arms fire from undetermined number of enemy located at 993530. Company I returned 400 rounds M-60 MG, 300 rounds 5.56 and 5 M-79 rounds, and searched the area with negative results.

(5) At 291345H 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines secured Objective Two.

(6) At 291420H UN-1E gunships conducted an air strike on enemy located at AT 990533 with good target coverage.

(7) At 292015H a Company I patrol moving to ambush sight saw 8 VC moving down a trail approximately 25 meters distant. The unit set up a hasty ambush and fired 150 rounds of 5.56 and 50 rounds of M-60 MG. One VC fell. Enemy returned 300 rounds of automatic and semi-automatic fire. The patrol then searched area with negative results.

e. 30 December

(1) By 300030H Company E 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines received 20 M-26 grenades at 997533 during the preceding four hours. It returned 15 M-79 rounds and searched the area at first light with negative results.

ENCLOSURE (2)

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

(2) At 300805H, a Company I unit observed one heavily camouflaged VC moving East to West at 990537. A sniper killed the VC with 5 rounds rifle fire. The body was kept under observation. Result: One VC KIA (confirmed).

(3) At 300835H a squad OP from Company I located at 992536 was keeping the VC body under observation when it received 100 rounds automatic and 100 rounds semi-automatic weapons fire from an estimated squad of VC. The squad returned 1 LAAW, 700 rounds 5.56mm, and 4 60mm rounds, one VC fell. This fire was not effective in suppressing enemy fire. The squad pulled back to the Company perimeter and called an artillery mission. They searched the area after the artillery mission and found several blood traces but could not locate enemy bodies.

(4) At 300840H a helicopter landing in LZ Hawk received 5-10 semi-automatic rounds from an undetermined location. One Marine reporting from Combat Base to Company E 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines was wounded while moving away from the LZ.

(5) At 301045H a Company I sniper observed one VC in an open field at 990539 carrying a weapon. He fired 10 rounds of rifle fire, 3 M-79 rounds, and 2 LAAWs. The VC fell as though hit. Search of the area disclosed three blood trails and two M-26 grenades which were booby trapped. They were blown in place.

(6) At 301120H Company E 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines was chopped from parent unit to 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines.

(7) At 301120H Operation AUBURN returned to Operational Control of 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines.

(8) At 301230H Company M found four heavily reinforced bunkers, numerous documents, small arms brass, 1 US pack and one 8" artillery round in vicinity of 990529. They blew the artillery round in place and returned other items to the Battalion S-2.

(9) At 301245H Company M, alerted by a scout dog, dropped to the ground immediately. They received 150 rounds of semi-automatic weapons fire from approximately 50 meters away (friendly coordinates 997530). They returned 175 rounds of 5.56 and 7 M-79 rounds, and called an artillery mission. They searched the area with negative results.

(10) At 301400H Company I moved to the Combat Base.

(11) At 301405H one Marine received minor shrapnel wounds from a friendly round. He was given first aid by a Corporal and sent to the Battalion CP for further treatment. Later, he was medevaced.

ENCLOSURE (2)

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

(12) At 301515H Company G 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines chopped to 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines.

(13) At 301540H resupply was effected.

(14) At 301830H a male detainee was returned to the Battalion CP from the Regimental CP. He revealed the location of an underground vat, approximately ten (10) feet in diameter containing approximately 11,000 lbs of processed rice. The detainee stated that this was VC rice, and it was destroyed.

f. 31 December 1967

(1) At 310430H one Marine was wounded by an incoming hand grenade. He was treated by the Battalion Surgeon and returned to duty.

(2) At 311307H Company G received approximately 50 rounds of semi-automatic weapons fire from an estimated 2-3 VC. Company G returned 100 rounds machine gun fire, and 50 5.56 rounds. The area was searched with negative results.

(3) At 311430H one Marine received a small piece of shrapnel in his right arm while destroying a bunker with an M-26 grenade.

(4) At 311500H one Marine fell while searching a bunker. His rifle discharged and the round went through his right hand, resulting in a medevac.

(5) At 311535H a unit from H&S Co was destroying captured ordnance in a bunker. One male VC fled from the bunker, and he was shot and killed by H&S personnel. One ChiCom grenade and one M-26 grenade were taken from the body.

(6) At 311700H 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines units had seized and searched Objectives B, C, and E in accordance with the Frag Order issued on 30 January 1967.

(7) At 312055H Company E 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines observed 4 VC with weapons 20 meters West of their position. Two M-26 grenades were thrown at the VC 1 VC fell, and the other three dragged the body away. 100 rounds 5.56 were fired at the fleeing VC. The area was searched with negative results.

(8) At 312115H Company E 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, received 2 rifle grenades. The grenades fell 25 meters short of the listening post position.

ENCLOSURE (2)

UNCLASSIFIED



UNCLASSIFIED

g. 01 January 1968

(1) At 010900H while effecting resupply, the helicopter received 4 to 5 rounds of semi-automatic weapons fire from coordinates 981532.

(2) At 011100H local security patrolling and hole hunting within the defensive perimeter were conducted in compliance with the terms of the truce.

(3) At 011100H, while checking a bunker, Company E, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines found a quantity of monofilament line attached to small bamboo stakes, apparently used as tripping devices for booby traps, two bandages, iodine and three miscellaneous items.

(4) At 011150H a Company M squad patrol received a 7-9 round burst from an automatic weapon located in the treeline approximately 300 meters away. The patrol returned 3 M-79 rounds and searched the area with negative results. (Enemy position 996536).

(5) At 011155H a Company G patrol found two trails with fresh bare foot prints. The hole hunting operation discovered numerous fortified shelters trenches and individual fighting holes. The following items were found in a tunnel: 1 poncho liner (US), 1 CS grenade and 5 cans of C-rations. All holes and trenches were either blown or filled in. The captured equipment was turned in to the Battalion S-2.

(6) At 011445H, Engineers attached to Company M blew 4 bunkers and tunnels 30 feet long. The tunnel extended from inside the perimeter to outside the perimeter, exiting in a cane field.

(7) At 011530H a Company M patrol found 1 flak jacket, 1 cartridge belt, 1 pack w/entrenching tool, 1 M-26 grenade, 2 antennas and 1 gas mask (all US).

(8) At 011830H Company M received approximately 20 rounds automatic weapons fire from 991535 and 993527. They returned 100 rounds M-60 MG, 200 5.56 rounds, and 4 M-79. A night activity in front of the lines searched the area and reported negative results.

(9) At 011930H Company E 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines reported that an undetermined number of enemy threw several grenades at their defensive position. When one grenade landed within a machine gun position, a Marine dived on top of the M-26 grenade and told his fellow Marines to clear the area. The grenade did not detonate, and it was thrown toward the enemy.

(10) At 012020H Company G received three incoming grenades at 986532. 3 M-26 grenades were returned. A search was made at first light with negative results.

ENCLOSURE (2)  
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

h. 2 January 1968

(1) At 020740H, Company E 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines received approximately 20 rounds of automatic weapons fire and 15 rounds semi-automatic weapons fire from a treeline approximately four hundred meters to their front. 50 rounds 5.56, 8 rounds M-79 were returned. The area was immediately swept with negative results.

(2) At 020830H, Company E, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines was advancing toward an assigned Objective when the attached scout dog picked up a strong scent. The unit then conducted a reconnaissance by fire, causing a VC ambush to fire prematurely. An estimated 12 VC fired 100 rounds automatic and 20 to 30 rounds semi-automatic fire. 300 M-60 MG rounds and 200 5.56 were returned. 1 VC fell. The area was searched and blood, and a small number of AK47, M-14, and M1 cartridges were found.

(3) At 020940H, the point man of Company G tripped a grenade booby trap, resulting in 1 USMC WIA Medevac.

(4) At 021100H, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines continued to sweep and search the Objective areas on the Western part of Go Noi Island.

(5) At 021300H, at 964540, Company E, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines received sniper fire from 964542. Fire was placed on the enemy positions. The area was swept with negative results.

(6) At 021330H Engineers attached to Company M blew four reinforced bunkers.

(7) At 021600H, a Marine from Company E, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines tripped a booby trap, (concussion type grenade) at 967539. No injuries were sustained.

(8) At 021715H one man from Company G tripped a booby trap, believed to be of a homemade variety, which was placed on the trail at 965541, resulting in 2 USMC WIA, 1 Priority Medevac and one Non Medevac.

(9) At 021715H, Company E, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines found one explosive device consisting of a C-ration can variety grenade, with a 15 foot long trip wire attached. The device was destroyed.

(10) At 021950H, a Company G squad ambush received an incoming grenade which resulted in 1 USN KIA and 3 USMC WIA, medevaced.

(11) At 022105H, a Company G squad ambush observed 7 VC approximately 30 meters away from their position. They threw 2 grenades at the enemy and fired 50 5.56 rounds. 4 VC were seen to fall as they were illuminated by the blast. Immediately after throwing the grenade, the ambush received one incoming grenade from another location, resulting in one USMC WIA, Non-medevac.

ENCLOSURE (2)  
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

i. 3 January 1968

(1) At 030825H, a Company G platoon sent to search the area of the previous night's ambush received 10-15 sniper rounds from the cemetery located at 966513, resulting in 1 USMC WIA. (Emergency Medevac). 200 rounds M-60 MG, 11 60mm mortar rounds and 100 5.56 rounds were returned.

(2) From 030930H until 031215H, all units crossing the stream south of the AO received harrassing sniper fire from an undetermined number of enemy in the vicinity of 955542. Artillery missions were called on these positions.

(3) At 031040H Company G received several sniper rounds at 956537 from an unknown location. One Marine received a superficial bullet wound in the arm. (Non-Medevac)

(4) At 031330H, Company G, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines chopped to parent unit.

(5) At 031400H Company E, 2nd Battalion 3rd Marines chopped to parent unit.

(6) At 031430H Company E, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines chopped to parent unit, and returned by truck.

(7) At 031439H, a Marine in the left flank security element of Company M tripped a concussion grenade booby trap located in tall grass. 2 casualties (non-medevac) were sustained.

(8) At 031530H Operation AUBURN terminated.

(9) At 031725H Company M and the Alpha Command Group displaced to the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Combat Base, by truck.

ii. Resultsa. Enemy

(1) Personnel: 37 KIA (confirmed)

(2) Material

- (a) Rifles 5
- (b) Pistols 2
- (c) Ammo-2,000 rds, 7.62 long
- (d) Rice - 11,000 lbs (processed)
- (e) Grenades 5
- (f) US 2.75 Rockets 5
- (g) Large amounts of assorted detonating devices and shaped charges.
- (h) Assorted medicines
- (i) Uniforms 6

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

b. Friendly

- (1) KIA - 23
- (2) WIA - 62 (52 WIAE and 10 WIANE)

12. Administrationa. Resupply

- (1) All resupply was effected by helilift.
- (2) The HST net was used as a logistical and helicopter control net.
- (3) In general, helicopter support for resupply was excellent.

b. Maintenance. No maintenance problems were encountered.c. Treatment of Casualties, Evacuation and Hospitalization

(1) Treatment of casualties was performed in an excellent manner by the 3/5 medical detachment in the field.

(2) Evacuation of casualties was accomplished within a minimum of amount of time.

(3) Difficulties were encountered in the area of casualty tabulating and reporting on D-day. The casualty reporter became a casualty on D-day and this contributed directly to the difficulties. Medevac helicopters came under fire while in the zone and on occasion lifted off with body bearers aboard. Tactical radio traffic was at a maximum on D-day and limited the administrative messages which could be transmitted.

d. Transportation. No problems were encountered with transportation. Replacement and special supplies were transported to the LSA by truck or hand carried. All resupplies and replacements were delivered to the field by helicopter from the LSA.

e. Communications

(1) AN/PRC 25 radios performed extremely well. The Battalion was able to communicate effectively with its rear echelon and with Regiment.

(2) The AN/PRC 41 was used extensively for controlling fixed wing air support by ground FAC Teams and to communicate with aerial observers and helicopter pilots when other means of communications were not feasible.

(3) Because of the multitude of units in this area of operations, traffic on some frequencies interfered with others. Units operating in the same general area or adjacent areas need to effect liaison so as to minimize difficulties of this nature.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

f. Medical Evacuation

- |   |      |
|---|------|
| (1) Total number of medical evacuations | - 75 |
| (2) Killed Action                       | - 23 |
| (3) Wounded in Action                   | - 61 |
| (4) Wounded in Action, Non Evac         | - 10 |
| (5) Non Combat Deaths                   | - 0  |
| (6) Non Combat Injuries, Evac           | - 1  |

13. Commander's Analysis

a. As the initial landing was made in landing zone Hawk on D-day, the zone progressively moved westward, with each helicopter wave landing a little farther west than the last wave. This increased the coordination difficulties faced by the CO, Company E, 2nd Bn 3rd Marines. As that unit became more deeply and closely involved in heavy contact with the sizable enemy force southwest of LZ Hawk, it became apparent that our mission of establishing a blocking force along the railroad track was impractical. Consequently, Company I, 3rd Bn, 5th Marines was called from Objective A to support Company E, and the Bald Eagle, Company M, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines, was committed into LZ Hawk at L+5<sup>1</sup> hours. By 281630H, the situation was well in hand, and the enemy had broken contact.

b. Upon receipt of 5th Marines Frag Order 76-67, we proceeded westward on Go Noi Island, in compliance with our new mission, until D+6, when we extracted from Phu Lac (6) in the 2nd Bn, 5th Marines, TAOR. Contact with significant enemy forces was not made, due to the abundance of luxuriant natural cover and concealment, and the large area covered. I feel that a larger force than a battalion is required for adequate coverage of the AO. Large enemy forces could have evaded our search and destroy efforts, concealed in the vast expanses of elephant grass, in some cases reaching twelve feet in height.

c. The unnecessary check fires imposed on direct support artillery on D-day was and is a matter of great concern (See paragraph 6a). Vitally required fire support was needlessly withheld from the Battalion because of this imposition. The tactical unit controlling the operation must be allowed to effect the necessary coordination of all supporting arms.

14. Recommendations

a. That future Operations in this AO should be conducted by a minimum of two maneuver Battalions.

b. That an extensive defoliation program should be immediately initiated in the AUBURN AO.

c. That checking the fire of direct support artillery should be the sole responsibility of the supported unit commander.

*W. K. ROCKEY*  
W. K. ROCKEY

UNCLASSIFIED